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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 001100

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KPKO](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: INTRA-FDLR FIGHTING IN EASTERN DRC

REF: A) KINSHASA 1099 B) KINSHASA 1091 C)  
MEECE/FELLOWS JULY 6 TELCON

Classified By: Ambassador Roger Meece. Reason 1.4 (b/d).

1. (C) MONUC and GDRC sources report fighting between FDLR units in eastern DRC. In a July 6 meeting, Presidency Special Advisor for Security Samba Kaputo told the Ambassadors/Charges of the U.S., Belgium, and Holland and UN SRSG Swing that fighting had apparently started around 1730 hrs (local) on July 5, and had continued through the 6th.

2. (C) Kaputo characterized the fighting as a strike by FDLR hard-liners seeking to derail efforts by FDLR South Division commander Colonel Amani to organize peaceful repatriation of a number of FDLR combatants to Rwanda. Kaputo indicated that the FDLR general headquarters is controlled by "radicals" led by General Mudkumura who have no interest in seeing the recent FDLR-stated commitment to repatriation implemented. They therefore launched the attack against Amani and his supporters. Kaputo indicated that GDRC information as of late July 5 suggested that Amani had the upper hand in the fighting.

3. (C) As of July 5, no/no GDRC nor MONUC forces were involved in the combat. SRSG Swing confirmed to the Ambassador that the reported intra-FDLR fighting is not related to the recently-launched MONUC Falcon Sweep operation in South Kivu (ref A). Likewise, Kaputo said that there are no FARDC forces involved, although he noted that civilians are inevitably being affected, and that elements from the South Kivu-based 10th military district are being sent to the area of the fighting to try to ensure civilians are protected to the extent possible.

4. (C) Asked directly about the scale of the fighting, Kaputo said that he had no information indicating the number of combatants involved on either side. Kaputo did stress that an Amani defeat by the opposing FDLR forces would represent a significant setback, ensuring that other FDLR combatants inclined toward repatriation would be intimidated into pulling back. Conversely, a clear Amani victory would presumably strengthen his hand.

5. (C) MONUC political officers confirmed that it appeared in recent days that Amani had been preparing to lead what seemed to be a significant number of FDLR followers to repatriate. Amani has been a primary recent focus of GDRC efforts to promote FDLR repatriation following the apparent failure of the GDRC/Sant, Egidio Rome initiative involving European-based FDLR leaders to produce results. Amani was reportedly the moving force behind the recent FDLR field statement reiterating support for peaceful repatriation reported (ref B). Septel will report in further detail the current GDRC thinking and plans regarding the FDLR.

16. (C) Comment: Kaputo invariably provides spin to his information, and the account he provides neatly aligns with his recent reported efforts targeting Amani to promote FDLR repatriation. Clashes among FDLR units could also be related to recent internal FDLR so-called elections, and rivalries that the exercise may have produced. Nonetheless, this is the first time anyone here can recall of reported internal FDLR fighting, and it clearly represents a qualitatively new factor in the situation. Insofar as Amani is interested in pursuing repatriation and able to take significant numbers with him, he would indeed be a threat to FDLR hard-line interests. End comment.

MEECE